

bend resiliently as a flange extending horizontally from the skirt rides on the bucket wall, wherein the platform and skirt include channels in the skirt opening at the platform on the platform perimeter at the lower perimeter portion and extending along the skirt channeling debris from the platform to the bucket bottom outside the skirt.

16. (Original) The wash bucket screen of claim 15 wherein the platform further comprises a plurality of ridges disposed radially on the platform from a center to a platform perimeter.
17. (Previously amended) The wash bucket screen of claim 19 further comprising a slanted platform supported on a depending skirt sized to flexibly engage the water bucket wall above the bucket bottom with channels on the platform skirt opening at the platform perimeter at a lower perimeter portion and channeling debris from the slanted planar platform to the bucket bottom.
18. (Canceled).
19. (Previously added) A wash bucket screen for use in a water bucket having a bottom and walls or a single cylindrical or frustum wall, comprising a planar platform slanted from horizontal in a single plane having a plurality of holes therethrough and supported above a bucket bottom on a vertical skirt depending from a platform perimeter and sized to flexibly engage a water bucket wall.

REMARKS

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of claim 8 and claim 8 has been canceled. Claim 1 has also been amended to eliminate superfluous description of the bucket shape. Claim 10 has been amended to include limitations of claim 1 as previously amended, putting claim 10 in independent form. Claim 15 has been amended to include the limitations added in previous amendment to claim 10.

The Examiner cite to Biesinger (US 6,161,701) as anticipating claim 1 as amended to include the limitations of claim 8 is no longer valid; Biesinger does not disclose a planar (flat) platform slanted from a high platform perimeter portion to a lower platform perimeter portion. Perimeter is to be interpreted in its normal usage: "the circumference, border, or outer boundary of a two-dimensional figure." (Websters Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language, Copyright 1989). This is consistent with Applicant's usage of "perimeter" in the specification and drawings. (See page 3 where the perimeter is identified as element 18, shown

in FIG. 4 to be at the border of the platform; the perimeter is also identified as element 30 in FIG. 2, also located at the circumference and outer boundary of the platform.)

The Examiner cites Hill (US 44,311) as anticipating claims 1, 3, 4, and 6. Applicant traverses the examiner's application of this cite. The Examiner claims that the Hill strainer is capable of use in wash bucket having a bottom and walls. This is inconsistent with Hill's disclosure of a screen (adjustable percolator) in a funnel, which inherently has no bottom. Applicant's device requires that his screen be supported from a bucket bottom. Hill's flanges are configured to rest on tapered funnel walls as guides to "adjust the percolator to any taper of funnel, and to retain the percolator in place while in use." Hill does not disclose supporting his platform from the flanges; rather, his platform rests directly on funnel walls and is not supported by his flanges. There is no suggestion in Hill that his platform could be supported by his flange distal ends resting on a bucket bottom. To the contrary, Hill's flanges are "yielding or flexible" which is inconsistent with being sufficiently rigid to support a platform by distal ends resting on a bucket bottom. Hill teaches only that his flanges lean on funnel walls for support. Hill's figures indicate that the flanges derive their support from face to face contact with the funnel walls, a structure different and inconsistent with Applicant's supporting skirt. It is impermissible speculation and contrary to Hill's disclosure that the Hill flanges could stand on a bottom as a support to the platform.

Further, contrary to the examiner's premise, as pointed out above, Hill's funnel is not all similar in shape to Applicant's wash bucket: the funnel has no bottom from which to support the platform, the Hill platform being supported on funnel sides.

In Claim 3, Applicant explicitly provides and requires that the platform skirt is "adapted to extend to a bucket wall providing an effective splash shield...." The Hill funnel has no

bottom that could cause a splash, which splash is to be protected by the platform skirt. The Hill flanges inherently cannot be a splash shield and, consistently, there is no teaching in Hill of a splash shield. The Hill flanges are spaced apart around the platform perimeter. The mutually spaced apart flanges would be an ineffective shield in their disclosed configuration.

With regard to claim 4, Hill does not disclose a horizontally extending element in its flanges either in his specification or his drawings. The examiner deduces that such an element must exist because the flange may be concave. The conclusion is unwarranted. A concave shape may exist without a horizontal portion and indeed there does not appear to be a horizontal portion of Hill's flanges. As appears to be shown in Hill's figure 2, the flange has a negative curvature with its distal end not even reaching vertical. Applicant's claim 4 requires an element (identified by applicant as a flange, coincidentally) "extending horizontally outward from the skirt." The examiner appears to derive a Hill horizontal element from an inclined flange with a curvature. An inclined element is not equivalent to a horizontal element because the degree of incline can be represented by a combination of vertical and horizontal descriptors. Webster defines "horizontal" as "at right angles to the vertical; parallel to level ground"(and other similar definitions related to parallel with the horizon). An inclined element is by definition not horizontal.

The examiner cites Dunn et al. (US 3,516,478) as anticipating Applicant's claims 1, 8 and 13-14. With regard to claim 1 as amended to include the limitations of claim 8, Dunn does not disclose a planar platform slanting from a high platform perimeter portion to a lower platform perimeter portion. As provided above, the term "perimeter" used with its ordinary meaning does not allow the examiner's construction.

The examiner rejects claims 8 and 19 based on Hill in view of Dunn, relying on Dunn to teach a planar platform slanting from a high platform perimeter to a lower platform perimeter as shown in Dunn figure 4. The examiner is mistaken. Figure 4 of Dunn does not show a planar platform, but rather a domed platform (See Dunn Column 3, Lines 55-57). Being a domed platform it does not slant from one side to another side but rather from its center outward to its perimeter. Perhaps the examiner is misinterpreting the term "perimeter."

The examiner rejects claim 10 and 17 also based on Hill in view of Dunn, relying on Hill to teach a platform that includes channels in the skirt. Inherent in the channels required by Applicant is that they be capable of channeling debris from the platform to the bucket bottom outside the skirt. Claim 10 explicitly requires that the channels open at the platform perimeter, which enables debris to pass from the platform alongside the skirt. Hill's slits terminate short of the platform and therefore do not open at the platform perimeter to allow debris to pass from the platform through the channels to the bucket bottom. The Hill slits do not function to route debris and do not provide access to debris on the platform. Thus Hill is not a proper basis for rejection of claim 10.

The examiner rejects claim 15 and 16 based on Dunn in view of Hill, relying on Dunn to teach a slanting platform, which Dunn does not do (see above). Because Dunn does not disclose the premise suggested by the examiner, combining Dunn with Hill also does not disclose Applicant's claims 15 and 16. Also see the above argument with regard to claims 10 and 17 regarding the Hill slits not being channels.

Independent claims as amended are believed to be in allowable form. Dependent claims as amended should be allowed as dependent on allowable independent claims. If the examiner

finds that a further amendment in addition to the above amendments would put a claim in allowable form, the examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned with a recommendation..

The undersigned believes there is no fee due. If for any reason this submittal is not deemed timely, Applicant request an extension of time sufficient to make the submittal timely and authorizes the examiner to charge this or any other necessary fee is associated with this submittal to the undersign's deposit account, 500416.

For Applicant, Cresswell

Respectfully,



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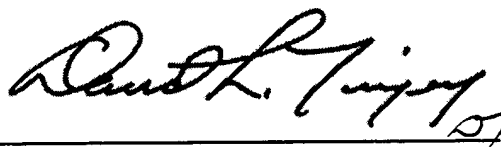
Dated: July 17, 2003

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CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service on this day of July 17, 2003 with sufficient postage as first class mail in an envelope addressed to:

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